



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Testing for COVID-19 in Mississippi is currently available through the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) Public Health Laboratory and through commercial labs (e.g. LabCorp, Quest, AEL and others). MSDH will be prioritizing the following groups for testing at the Public Health Laboratory, effective immediately.

Covid-19 Testing priorities at the Mississippi Public Laboratory

Symptomatic individuals with fever and/or acute respiratory illness who meet the following criteria:

1) Hospitalized and long-term care patients with symptoms of COVID-19.
2) Outbreak and healthcare associated cases.
3) Healthcare workers with symptoms of COVID-19

MSDH has a goal of <24 hours from receipt in the lab for all submissions from hospitalized patients. For specimens requiring rapid turn-around – direct drop off to the State Public Health Lab is recommended. Please designate the Priority Group for testing on the Laboratory Requisition Form (https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/8500.pdf) when submitting to the PHL to ensure the tests are performed as priority (i.e., hospitalized, outbreak, long-term care resident).

All other outpatient testing should now be directed to private commercial labs, or other partners as they come online. Samples submitted to MSDH from outpatient settings will be performed as quickly as possible, but delays in reporting are likely.

Community Based Testing Sites Guidance

In general, the priority patients for COVID-19 testing in the community are those with fever and/or acute respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing) who meet the following criteria:

- 1) Symptomatic healthcare personnel (including first responders) or known contact to a suspected or confirmed cases in the 14 days prior to symptom onset.
- 2) Symptomatic individuals at higher risk for poor outcomes (older adults and/or underlying chronic disease, including residents in long term care facilities).

When screening individuals for testing, collect of the following details upfront and provide to MSDH if the test is **positive**:

1. Complete demographic information including name, age, date of birth and accurate address and phone number.
2. Date of onset of symptoms
3. Symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath)
4. Underlying chronic medical conditions, if known (e.g., chronic respiratory disease, heart disease, diabetes)
5. Healthcare worker, and if yes where do they work and last time they worked
6. Where they are employed if not a healthcare worker
7. Known contact to a case in the 14 days prior to onset
8. Known travel (including US travel) in the 14 days prior to onset

If you identify a positive COVID-19 case, please fax to 601-576-7497 (fax information on COVID-19 positive cases only). This information will be required for epidemiologic investigations of confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Updated 3/31/2020